

**PUBLIC HEARING of the Town Council held Thursday, May 22, 2008 at 7:04 P.M. in the auditorium of the Burrillville High School, 425 East Avenue, Harrisville, for and within the Town of Burrillville.**

**Council Vice President Wallace F. Lees called the hearing to order at 7:04 p.m.**

**Council Vice President Lees asked for the record whether Councilor Kevin M. Blais would participate in the hearing. Councilor Blais informed Council Vice President Lees that he would be seated in the audience and participate from that location due to fact that there was no equipment present to accommodate his hearing disability.**

**PRESENT: Councilors Wallace F. Lees, Kevin M. Blais, Margaret L. Dudley, John M. Karmozyn Jr. and Norman C. Mainville**

**MEMBERS ABSENT: Council President Nancy F. Binns was excused due to vacation. Councilor Cynthia L. Roe was excused due to family illness.**

**ALSO PRESENT: Budget Board members Mark Brizard, David Ketcham and Debra Stockwell**

**Relative to discussing the Municipal Budget**

**NOTE: The public hearing was duly advertised in the Woonsocket**

**Call on May 8, 12, and 14, 2008.**

## **1. Comments from the Budget Board**

**Mark Brizard, Vice Chairman of the Budget Board, commented on the Budget Board recommendation for FY2009, a copy of which is on file with the record of the hearing. Mr. Brizard discussed the difficulty in preparing a recommendation due to the tax cap statute, reduced state aid, and the added operating cost of the new library. Mr. Brizard noted the Budget Board's belief that the town does not have an oversized municipal workforce, that the municipal operating budgets are under control, and acknowledged that certain expenses, such as general services and benefits, have associated contractual increases.**

**Mr. Brizard outlined the Budget Board recommendations to reduce special appropriations and to implement fees to quasi-municipal groups for costs associated with town services.**

**Mr. Brizard thanked the department heads and administration for their hard work and cooperation during the Budget Board's work on the FY2009 budget.**

## **2. Comments from Michael C. Wood, Town Manager**

**Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, noted for the record that the portable assistive listening device had been provided for Councilor**

**Blais' use. He discussed efforts to retrofit the town hall equipment to the auditorium's permanent system, which had been unsuccessful to date.**

**Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, noted that the present hearing was to discuss the municipal budget and that details of the school budget would be heard at a subsequent hearing, scheduled for Thursday, May 29, 2008.**

**Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, summarized recommended changes to the operating budget. Mr. Wood said that the budget was within the five percent cap, listed recommendations included in the proposed budget, and said that the impact of the recommended budget would be a tax increase of forty cents per \$1,000 valuation, raising the tax rate from \$11.60 to \$12.00. At the request of Council Vice President Wallace F. Lees, Mr. Wood reviewed and explained recommended budget changes, as outlined in his May 5, 2008 budget message, a copy of which is on file with the record of the hearing.**

**Mr. Wood noted that the tax rate is affected in five cent increments for changes of \$90,000 on the budget. Mr. Wood discussed the tax cap, noting that the proposal was approximately \$100,000 below the maximum allowed. He noted that the budget could change before adoption, based on issues such as state aid.**

**In conclusion, Mr. Wood indicated that the town was in good financial**

shape and discussed future changes in debt service that would allow the town to maintain the status quo in the coming year.

### **3. Public Comment:**

**Note: Persons who wish to address the Council shall state their name and address.**

Susan Kent of Benedict Road voiced opposition to any increase in the tax rate. Ms. Kent suggested that reductions be made to prevent higher taxes. Ms. Kent discussed financial problems, the high foreclosure rate, suggested that residents could not afford increased taxes, and warned that higher taxes could result in a more foreclosures.

Beverly Kociuba of Black Hut Road agreed with Ms. Kent's comments. Ms. Kociuba noted that her property taxes had increased after revaluation. Ms. Kociuba discussed the Town's dependence on homeowners and taxpayers on fixed incomes.

Francis Chartier of Harrisville Main Street agreed with Ms. Kent and Ms. Kociuba, echoing their concerns that increased taxes would result in people losing their homes.

Michele Badessa of Black Hut Road agreed with the previous speakers. Ms. Badessa said she believed her taxes are too high for her property, that the valuation of her home is not going up but the

taxes are. Ms. Badessa discussed family expenses. Ms. Badessa, suggested reducing salaries, which she believes are too high.

#### **4. VOTED to close the public hearing.**

**Motion by Councilor Norman C. Mainville. Seconded by Councilor John M. Karmozyn, Jr. The motion carried, four in favor, one abstention, two excused. Voting in favor of the motion were Councilors Wallace F. Lees, Margaret L. Dudley, John M. Karmozyn Jr., and Norman C. Mainville. Councilor Kevin M. Blais abstained. Council President Nancy F. Binns and Councilor Cynthia L. Roe were excused.**

#### **5. Town Council deliberation**

**Councilor Margaret L. Dudley asked questions related to special appropriations and the reduction of the variance overlay. These items were discussed.**

**Councilor Kevin M. Blais asked about the incentive program, the state reimbursement for the ice rink, the replacement of police vehicles, the use of savings realized by his not receiving benefits, the Office of Library and Information Services reimbursement for the library. Each issue was discussed.**

**Council Vice President Wallace F. Lees thanked residents for**

**attending and particularly those who had addressed the town council.**

**6. VOTED to adjourn.**

**Motion by Councilor Norman C. Mainville. Seconded by Councilor John M. Karmozyn, Jr. The motion carried, four in favor, one abstention, two excused. Voting in favor of the motion were Councilors Wallace F. Lees, Margaret L. Dudley, John M. Karmozyn Jr., and Norman C. Mainville. Councilor Kevin M. Blais abstained. Council President Nancy F. Binns and Councilor Cynthia L. Roe were excused.**

**Louise R. Phaneuf, Town Clerk**